

Rompers Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322340
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Inspector	Frank William Kelly
Setting Address	2 Allerton Drive, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 6HJ
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Registered person	Catherine Flynn
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Rompers Day Nursery was registered in 1992 and is operated by an individual. It operates from a large detached property which is situated in the Allerton area of Liverpool.

A maximum of 46 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 68 children aged from five months to four years on roll. Of these, 19 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area as parents travel into and around the area to work. The service operates from 08.00 to 17.30 each weekday, all year round. Children are cared for within four playrooms on two floors of the property. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting employs 15 staff; of these, 14 hold appropriate childcare qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification and another is working towards an additional qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and well-being is promoted as the setting is kept suitably clean. Regular recorded checks throughout the day further ensure that consistent standards are maintained in the bathrooms and food preparation areas at all times. Staff follow procedures, such as wiping surfaces and washing their hands before serving food; they wear disposable protective clothing when changing the children.

The policies and procedures in place are reflective of legislation and the requirements of the National Standards. Parents are made aware of these at registration and kept informed of any changes that occur. For example, recent advice received from the Environmental Health Officer regarding exclusion times for children with gastroenteritis has been shared with parents via the nursery newsletter. This helps parents to understand the importance of why not bringing their children into nursery when they are unwell helps to minimise further spread of infection.

Most staff hold up to date first aid certificates and access to first aid equipment is available throughout the nursery. It is always taken when children go out on a trip. Accident records are suitably recorded. Records for the administration of medication are maintained and children's personal details include parental consent for the seeking of emergency medical treatment.

Children are gaining a good awareness of personal hygiene routines as they have pictorial reminders displayed by the sinks and staff encourage them to wash their hands before snacks or after visiting the toilet. Staff monitor this well as they check that little hands are clean and dried properly when children have visited the bathroom independently.

Children's physical development holds a high priority in this setting. Irrespective of the weather children have daily opportunities to explore the excellent outdoor play area where they can climb, slide, ride wheeled resources, dig, plant, brush up fallen leaves and run around. Children are beginning to recognise and express their physical needs. For example, an older child tells the staff that she is cold. The member of staff responds immediately and gives the child a big hug to warm her up. She then encourages all the children to join in circle games, such as the 'hoke koke' to warm them up.

After all the exertion they encourage the children to listen to their bodies. They talk about how exercise is important to keeping healthy and encourage children to feel and listen to their heart beats. In response children test their friends and others present. They tell visitors that they have no heart beat because they have not been jumping up and down.

Indoors, children have access to a mini gym, large soft play equipment and a wide range of tools and materials that promote their hand to eye coordination. These include writing with pens, using scissors and fitting together construction toys and blocks.

Babies and toddlers have good space to crawl and move around. Staff encourage and support them to use spoons to feed themselves. They frequently explore tactile materials, such as corn flour gloop and thick paint. Small babies enjoy cuddles and being nursed when they are having their bottle and individual eating and resting routines are respected and followed. All children enjoy opportunities to sit quietly and relax in comfortable areas during their day.

Secure systems are in place for sharing information about the children's individual dietary needs and preferences. Children's allergies are clearly known by those preparing the food and a 'red card' warning system is in place to alert all staff about who has specific dietary or health needs. Food is freshly prepared on a daily basis with it being sourced from local reputable retailers. Children eat well and enjoy a selection of vegetables as accompaniments to dishes including chunky fish pie, roast chicken and vegetable korma. Fruit, yogurts, soups and cereals are regularly served throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are well maintained and furnished and decorated to a satisfactory standard. The setting is made very warm and welcoming; creative use of the children's art work, equipment, real image posters, pictures, and furniture makes this a fun and child centred place to be. Playrooms have good natural light, and have been organised to enable children to move freely and safely throughout.

The garden is excellent. It is a vibrant riot of colour and texture, which provides the children with endless play and investigation opportunities. Surfaces have been varied to provide children with slopes. Cobbled areas have dips to provide the formation of puddles so the toddlers can excitedly jump, kick and splash. Hidden piles of logs encourage mini beasts; bird feeders, sensory plants and raised growing beds provide children with seasonal and constantly changing environments to explore and revisit. There are playhouses to play in, climbing frames to master and giant play boards to practise threading and shape matching. Babies have textured mirrors to look at themselves in.

Equipment throughout the setting is of a good quality and well maintained. Most is placed at the children's level enabling independent selections. Those resources stored above the children's eye level are clearly labelled with pictures to help the children identify what is in the boxes. Staff state that children can request any that they wish; some children confidently request favourites, such as the gorillas from other rooms.

The children's safety is promoted as staff ensure that safety features, for example, safety gates on stairways are fully secured at all times. Children remain under close supervision and access to the setting is restricted by a key pad system. Risk assessments are carried out daily before children arrive and a system for reporting and completing repairs is in place. Staff monitor resting children regularly and knowledgeably explain to visitors the emergency procedures regarding Sleeping Infant Death Syndrome.

Fire safety is well practised with the extinguishers being serviced annually, and the detection system checked on a weekly basis. However, the management at present do not record this as part of their monitoring system. The evacuation procedure is clearly signposted and monthly drills are conducted with the children. Consideration is given to children who attend part time by holding the drills on different days and at different times. This is helping all the children to become familiar with what to do in an emergency.

Staff are helping children learn about keeping themselves safe during the daily routines. For example, two-year-olds independently seek the dustpan and brush to clear up spilt sand and older children explain to visitors that you must not walk backwards as 'you might bump into someone and hurt them'. Activities about stranger danger and road safety are introduced by safety officers during planned visits. Staff further reinforce this through the introduction of

road safety equipment in the garden. This enables staff to revisit what the children have learnt and lets the children practise their learning during their play.

There is a clear child protection policy and a designated person responsible for child protection who has recently updated their training. The setting is aware of the introduction of new systems by the local integrated children's services and is taking steps to implement these changes.

Some staff have completed relevant training and all have covered procedures during induction. Those asked about child protection procedures are able to demonstrate an understanding of potential signs and indicators of abuse. They are clear who they need to inform within the nursery and the integrated children's services department. However, some staff are less familiar with some aspects, such as the requirement to inform Ofsted of any allegations made against members of staff or volunteers. The policies and procedures in place reflect those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and current government guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The physical environment and imaginative use of technology and natural resources provides children with excellent first hand learning experiences. For example, the staff fitted a camera into a nesting box, which in turn was connected to the television in the nursery. The children were able to watch the whole nesting process. The staff have high but realistic expectations of what the children can achieve. For instance, toddlers are encouraged to try to fish ducks out of the water tray. This takes some skill and concentration for children so young but staff support this by ensuring that the canes are short and easy to manoeuvre. They clap and celebrate the children's perseverance and achievement, which in turn boosts their self-esteem and confidence.

There is a pleasant atmosphere and there is no rush in this setting as activities and routines follow the children's own needs. This means that children are relaxed and engaged in activities that are of interest to them. They are busy and animated in their play. Soothing music is played and children eat their meals unrushed, paint their pictures for as long as they wish and sometimes just sit quietly watching what others are doing in the room.

The staff have an excellent understanding of how to help children feel safe and secure. Interactions are warm, gentle and respectful. Pictures of the children and their families are displayed at low levels so children can look at familiar faces during their day. When possible any personal care is completed by the child's key worker. This helps the children form secure relationships with their special person, which in turn helps them to feel safe, happy and confident within their surroundings. The positive effect of this approach can be seen throughout the nursery. All children are eager to be in nursery and relish their time whilst there.

Excellent use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework is implemented in relation to the range of play experiences that are effectively linked to encourage children to be skilful communicators and eager learners. Two-year-olds are eager to use language to explain their understanding of what is happening. For example, when they are playing in the corn flour gloop, they explain to visitors that it is sticky when you touch it. When the surface sets they look at it, think about it and then announce 'it has gone dry'. They confidently express their needs and wishes both verbally and through their actions. Toddlers getting ready for their post lunch sleep choose their bed on which they intend to rest. One child gets up and goes to the nearby cupboard to fetch a favourite doll, confident that it is acceptable to do this. The child then settles down on their bed, relaxed and secure, and is soon asleep enjoying the rest needed.

There is a strong focus on exploratory and sensory play. Babies enjoy the texture and the taste of the paint, whilst toddlers sit amongst a mass of shredded paper. Arts, craft, sand, and water are included within the daily activities. Interest tables are provided throughout the nursery along with baskets of natural objects, such as pebbles and shells for children to feel, touch and talk about.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good because the staff have a secure and informed understanding of the Foundation Stage. This is reflected in the quality of the imaginative and interesting activities provided for the children. Activities are clearly linked to the six areas of learning and the stepping stones. Staff use good questioning and children's activities to focus on the planned learning intentions. For example, a focus on shapes in the environment was introduced by staff as they took their cardigan off. They discussed with the children the circular shapes of their large buttons. When children were looking at the pictures they had taken with the digital camera an older child noticed that the bike seat was 'like a triangle'.

Systems are in place for the evaluation of children's learning. The observations and assessments made by staff are recorded within the local authority progress documents. It is clear children are learning and making very good progress in their learning and development. However, the planning systems do not clearly identify the next steps for the individual child. They concentrate on the group as a whole. Consequently, there is a possibility that some children may not be sufficiently challenged or specific learning needs may be missed.

That said, the children, most of whom have only been in the pre-school room since September, are eager and confident learners. They are busy and talk constantly about what they are doing. They repeat new words, such as expanding whilst adding water to compost. They talk about what they see and think. For instance, one child suggests that the daffodil bulb looks like a carrot. They are eager to engage visitors in discussion about why they are here. They invite them to join the play and talk about their past experiences, such as when they went to Portugal or how they felt poorly on a bus. They help themselves to resources, such as pencils, often returning them to the writing areas without being asked by an adult. Most visit the toilet on their own and all attempt to put coats on or hang them on their peg.

Children enjoy books especially when they can also listen to the story through headphones and act out the story with toys, such as a tiger. They have good developing pencil skills and understand that print carries meaning. They eagerly join in rhyming and matching games, such as bat, cat, hat and mat. They count well in a group and older children are able to distinguish differing groups of numbers. For example, when visitors hold up different sets of fingers they correctly tell how many fingers are being held up and that there is more on one hand than the other. There are some numbers in the environment but at present they have not been included in the outdoor environment. Younger children use positional language as they talk about the toys being on and under the table and playing inside and outside the house.

The staff help children to develop their sense of time by discussing what day it is and which month. They talk with the children about November being the eleventh month and that Christmas is next month in December. The children are encouraged to take note of what the weather is today and staff use pictures as reminders placed next to the printed word. Children are very familiar with and extremely confident when using the technology available. They show little interest in the computer because they are too busy taking pictures with the video and digital cameras.

Children enjoy their role play, which is very well resourced and presented. They busily brush and tidy the play house and two friends spend the whole morning washing the cars at the 'car wash'. They use a full range of equipment including wipers, sponges, wheel brushes and lots of water. As space is a premium in the pre-school room children do not have continuous access to resources, such as paint. However, regular daily opportunities to stick, crayon and draw are in place. Planned sessions in a large shared room on the ground floor ensure that children do have some opportunities to paint or make models with recycled materials each week.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Rigorous systems are in place to ensure that information about individual children's needs are met and regularly updated. Staff consult with parents both verbally and through written documentation about children's routines and changing needs.

The setting has an excellent proactive approach to supporting children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Whilst at present they do not care for any children with such needs, the management is working closely with other professionals and agencies to establish equipment, information and procedures to have in place should specific care needs be required.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. There is a strong emphasis on citizenship, ecology and caring for other living things. The setting involves children in fundraising events, such as planting bulbs for cancer charities, collections for water aid and it has established links with a nursery school in Gambia. Regular letters and photographs are shared between both settings. Staff talk about the pictures with the children helping them to learn about their wider world.

Trips out into the local community are regularly undertaken both to local parks and attractions, such as the Albert Dock. Trips to the local supermarket are used to enhance children's understanding about money, road safety, and locating and colour recognition. For example, during visits to the shop the children are encouraged to seek and select yellow goods. Complimentary activities, such as visits by a Spanish teacher are helping children learn about others' similarities and differences.

Seasonal and cultural activities are linked to a variety of festivals to help support the children's understanding of similarities and differences. Currently children have begun to look at the winter festivals of light, which include Diwali, Hanukah and Christmas. These discussions are enhanced with stories about the customs and fun craft activities, such as making clay tea light holders. These are then incorporated into the role play areas to enable children to play and handle these new materials.

Staff manage the children's behaviour extremely well and give good consideration to the children's stage of development and maturity. The children are occupied, have good access to materials and adult interactions help them to resolve conflicts. Older two-year-olds make space for others who join them at the gloop tray. Children demonstrate a high level of self-control and an understanding of the need to show care with their peers. For instance, three-years-olds let other children join their game in the playhouse. When praised for letting another child join in the play, one child responds that 'you need to care for each other'. Lots of equipment, such as brooms for brushing means children are not waiting long periods of time if they have to share. The three-seater trike provides much fun and excellent opportunities for children to share and practise negotiation as they decide where to go next.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children benefit from the superb relationship staff have with parents. Parents are relaxed and chatty when leaving and collecting their children and much information is shared both verbally and in the form of two-way daily diaries. Staff use this information effectively to enhance the children's life experiences. For example, following a child's visit to a hairdresser, staff set up role play opportunities where the child was able to play out experiences with peers. Parents of children who have recently started are offered a video recording of their child at the end of the day. This helps to ease any concerns they may have about how their child is settling in.

All parents are provided with information about the learning programmes be it linked to the Foundation Stage or the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Displays including pictures of the children playing are accompanied by informative explanations about what the child is gaining from the experience. Regular newsletters help keep parents informed and parental questionnaires and suggestion boxes provide opportunities for parents to voice their opinions about the nursery. Regular parents' evenings and stay and play sessions are held, along with invitations to include comments within children's development files.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

The management implements regular self-evaluation as advised by Ofsted's pre-inspection information. In particular they use guidance publications about best practice, such as 'Safe and Sound' and 'Firm Foundations' to review and plan their current and future practice to good effect.

A secure recruitment and selection procedure is in place to ensure that children are kept safe and that the adults employed have the required knowledge and skills to successfully promote the outcomes for the children. The regular training, team meetings and social events are helping to create a positive environment within which the staff enjoy working. They have good professional development opportunities from external and in house training; they are invited to contribute ideas and discuss how the care is to be implemented. Consequently, the staff feel valued and many have remained in post for several years. This means that the children benefit from care by familiar adults throughout their time at nursery.

All policies and procedures are in place and on most occasions fully understood and implemented by the staff in a consistent manner. Inductions and regular appraisals help to keep staff up to date with changes. However, the management team do not have a formal system for monitoring documentation or daily routines to ensure that they are followed fully. For example, in one room, some of the children's departure times have not always been recorded; at mealtimes staff do not ensure that food is covered, when transferring it from the kitchen to the playrooms.

The leadership and management regarding nursery education is good. They have a clear commitment to improving the learning programme and demonstrate this through investment of equipment and training opportunities for staff. Advice is sought and responded to in an enthusiastic manner from the local advisory teacher team and links have been made with other local early years settings. Following discussion during the inspection the management were able to demonstrate how and what action is to be taken to further improve the planning systems.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection three recommendations were made in relation to improving the images of diversity throughout the setting, establishing a recording system for incidents of physical restraint and developing the staff's understanding of how and when to use the persona dolls.

Since then the setting has met all the recommendations fully. A pro-forma has been developed for recording any incidences of physical restraint as required by the National Standards. This includes the sharing of and written acknowledgement from parents should an incident ever take place.

Children are now provided with positive images that challenge stereotyping. For example, they show men as carers, women in non traditional roles, such as jet pilots and athletes who are wheel chair users. Some images have labels that focus on the activity in the picture rather than the skin tone. For instance, one picture shows a group of Asian fisherman who are laughing. The focus on the laughing helps children learn about similarities and differences, whilst showing different cultures and lifestyles. In addition, toys, books, musical instruments and artefacts are easily accessible to the children throughout the nursery.

Stories and characters have been developed for the persona dolls to help staff talk with the children about issues, such as feeling sad and bullying. This is a practical way to help children to talk about how they would feel if it happened to them and the impact that unkind actions can have on others.

At the last Nursery Education inspection three key issues were highlighted. These included the organisation of the pre-school environment, the opportunities for children to express their creativity through paintings and art work and further develop the short term plans about how children are grouped and staff are deployed.

Since then all three key issues have been fully addressed. Children's creativity is fostered through regular opportunities to draw, paint and use a variety of other materials. Staff display the children's work in a positive and highly visible manner throughout all areas of the nursery. This boosts the children's self-esteem as they see their pen drawings, self-portraits and other paintings on stairways, corridor walls and playroom display boards.

Children's daily routines are improved as the planning and organisation clearly identify how the set areas of continuous provision are to be resourced and which staff will be leading focused activities. The room has a comfortable seating and book area where children can sit and rest as the mood takes them.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- devise management tracking systems to ensure that all staff are fully familiar with all policies and procedures to enable them to implement them in a consistent manner.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- revise the current planning systems to ensure that they securely plan the next steps for the individual child's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk